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Message Text

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71
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01

STR-08 DRC-01 /202 W
---------- 125185
R 021812Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4433
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, UK
SUBJECT: LABOR PLEDGES MASSIVE NATIONALIZATION
REF: LONDON 11176

1. SUMMARY: CONFIRMING A MAJOR SHIFT TO THE LEFT THAT HAS BEEN TWO YEARS IN THE MAKING, THE LABOR PARTY'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE TODAY ENDORSED A PROGRAM OF SWEEPING NATIONALIZATION UNPRECEDENTED IN BRITISH HISTORY. YIELDING TO CUMULATIVE LEFT-WING PRESSURES, HAROLD WILSON PLEDGED THE NEXT LABOR GOVERNMENT TO INITIATE A MASSIVE EXTENSION OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP, BUT SUCCEEDED IN
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RESERVING TO HIMSELF AND HIS CABINET THE RIGHT TO ORDER

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ITS PACE AND PRIORITIES. THE MOST CRITICAL AND CLEARCUT ISSUE OF THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION IS BEGINNING TO TAKE SHAPE. END SUMMARY.

2. HAROLD WILSON HAS PLEDGED THE NEXT LABOR GOVERNMENT TO INITIATE A MASSIVE EXTENSION OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP IN BRITAIN, WHILE RESERVING TO HIMSELF AND HIS CABINET THE RIGHT TO ORDER THE PRIORITIES AND PACE OF SUCH NATIONALIZATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ECONOMIC SITUATION THEY CONFRONT WHEN THEY TAKE OFFICE. HIS STAND, OVERWHELMINGLY ENDORSED BY THE PARTY'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE TODAY, MAKES MORE SWEEPING PROMISES THAN ROY JENKINS AND OTHER SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN THE PARTY DEEM PRUDENT OR REALIZABLE, BUT FALLS SHORT OF THE REVOLUTION TOMORROW DEMANDED BY THE LEFT-WING OF THE PARTY.

3. IT IS IN SUM A STANDARD POLITICAL COMPROMISE, BUT ONE THAT PUSHES THE PARTY AS A WHOLE FURTHER TO THE LEFT THAN IT HAS BEEN SINCE 1945. IT ENVISAGES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE NATIONALIZATION OF ALL DEVELOPMENT LAND NEEDED TO THE END OF THE CENTURY, PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF ALL DOCKS, PORTS, ROAD TRANSPORT, OFF-SHORE OIL AND GAS, AND THE AIRCRAFT, PHARMACEUTICAL, AND MACHINE TOOL INDUSTRIES, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL HOLDING COMPANY TO PURCHASE CONTROLING INTERESTS IN A GRADUALLY EXTENDED LIST OF FIRMS. THIS DRASTIC TRANSFORMATION OF THE BRITISH ECONOMY WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED OVER A PERIOD OF TWO OR THREE PARLIAMENTS, I.E., 10 TO 15 YEARS.

4. IN THE WEEK-END MANEUVERING THAT PRECEDED CONFERENCE, WILSON FAILED IN HIS EFFORTS TO GET THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) TO MEET JOINTLY WITH THE SHADOW COMMITTEE (REFTEL). HE ACHIEVED HIS ESSENTIAL PURPOSE, HOWEVER, BY PERSUADING THE NEC AND THE BIG UNIONS TO SUPPORT RESOLUTIONS THAT WERE SUFFICIENTLY BROADLY DRAFTED SO AS TO ALLOW A FUTURE LABOR GOVERNMENT CONSIDERABLE LATITUDE IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROMISED PROGRAM OF NATIONALIZATION.

5. COMMENT: WILSON HAS SUCCESSFULLY CLEARED THE ONLY MAJOR HURDLE HE FACED AT THIS WEEK'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE. THE PARTY WILL HOLD TOGETHER. WHAT NOW REMAINS, AS HE HIMSELF TOLD CONFERENCE, IS THE FORMIDABLE TASK OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

CONVINCING THE BRITISH ELECTORATE THAT THE PROGRAM THE PARTY HAS ADOPTED IS A SOUND ONE. THE PERENNIAL DISPUTE BETWEEN SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ABOUT THE MERITS AND NGERS OF ADVOCATING NATIONALIZATION HAS BEEN DECIDED FOR THE TIME BEING IN FAVOR OF THE SOCIALISTS. FROM TODAY'S CONFERENCE DECISIONS IT IS CLEAR THAT FOR THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION AT LEAST THE PARTY HAS OPTED TO GIVE THE VOTERS A CHOICE INSTEAD

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